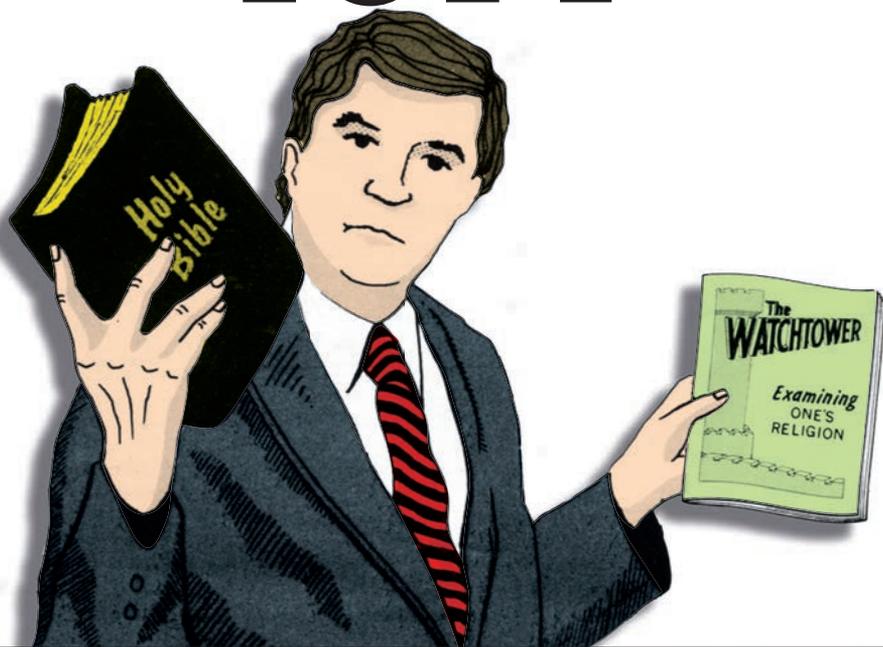


“And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”

— Luke 21:24

1914?



1914

AND THE GENTILE TIMES

by
Ralph Woodrow



WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

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*“Have I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?...What does the Scripture say?”
(Galatians 4:16, 30).*

Most biblical quotations in this booklet are from the *New King James Version*, but other translations, including the *New World Translation of the Scriptures*, have been compared and studied. *Any* translation of the Bible will support the conclusions presented.

When Charles Taze Russell, well-known for his role in promoting the 1914 teaching, is referred to simply as Russell—not always as Pastor Russell—no disrespect is intended.

In referring to Russell's writings or *Watchtower* publications, care has been taken not to quote anything out of context.

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1914 AND THE GENTILE TIMES

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Over a *century* has now passed since the year 1914. Charles Taze Russell (1852—1916), founder of the Watch Tower Society (known today as the Jehovah’s Witnesses), writing in the late 1800s, said:

“The ‘Times of the Gentiles’...will run fully out with the year A.D. 1914.”

“[Christ] will then be present as earth’s new Ruler.”

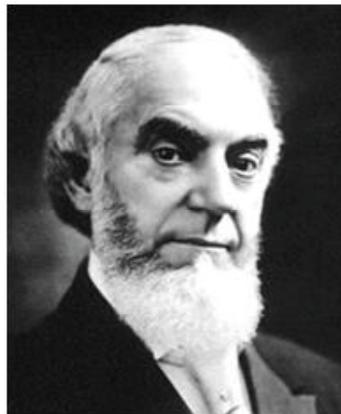
“All present governments will be overthrown and dissolved.”

“Neither Israel nor the world of mankind...will longer be trodden down, oppressed and misruled by beastly Gentile powers.”

“The Kingdom of God and his Christ will then be established in the earth....The whole earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord—with knowledge, and righteousness, and peace.”
(*The Time is at Hand*, pp. 77, 98, 99, 170).

Russell believed these claims about the year 1914 were taught in the Scriptures—and that the 1914 date was even confirmed by certain measurements within the Great Pyramid in Egypt! But the fact is: The things he said would happen in 1914 *did not happen!* So, was the teaching actually based on Scripture?

Following the example of the noble Bereans, who “searched the Scriptures daily” to see if what



Charles Taze Russell

they heard was true (Acts 17:11), I have done this concerning the 1914 teaching. My conclusion is that it is most definitely *not* what the Scriptures say.

I have long been familiar with the 1914 teaching. For many years I have owned copies of Russell's Six Volumes, *Studies in the Scriptures*.^{*} While Jehovah's Witnesses today, in numerous ways, try to distance themselves from Russell, they still hold to the 1914 date and have built a number of doctrines on it. It is considered an *essential*; it continues to be preached, written about, and promoted.

Our disagreement with Russell regarding 1914 is not personal. He was not wrong on "everything," and actually said some good things. In his foreword to *The Battle of Armageddon* (p. 5), for example, he wrote:

"We wish to state most emphatically that we are saying nothing whatever against godly Christians anywhere, at any time, whether in any church or out of any church. We have nothing to say respecting people. We discuss PRINCIPLES, DOCTRINES, ALWAYS; INDIVIDUALS, never! God has not commissioned us to discuss **people**; it is ours to discuss **His Word**." (Emphasis in the original.)

The issue before us is not Russell. Our purpose is not to speak evil of him. We are not to judge another's servant. To his own master he will stand or fall. Each will give an account of himself to God (Titus 3:2; Rom. 14:4, 12).

Nor is it our intention to make light of people, past or present, who have believed in the 1914 teaching. Those I have known over the years (acquaintances, neighbors, and relatives) who believed—or once believed—this way were, as far as I know, good, honorable, sincere people.

Had we been living back in the years leading up to 1914—and if we believed the BIBLE taught that all evil governments would

^{*} The six volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures*, are: *The Plan of the Ages* (Vol. 1, 1886); *The Time is at Hand* (Vol. 2, 1889); *Thy Kingdom Come* (Vol. 3, 1890); *The Battle of Armageddon* (Vol. 4, 1897); *The At-one-ment Between God and Men* (Vol. 5, 1899); *The New Creation* (Vol. 6, 1904).

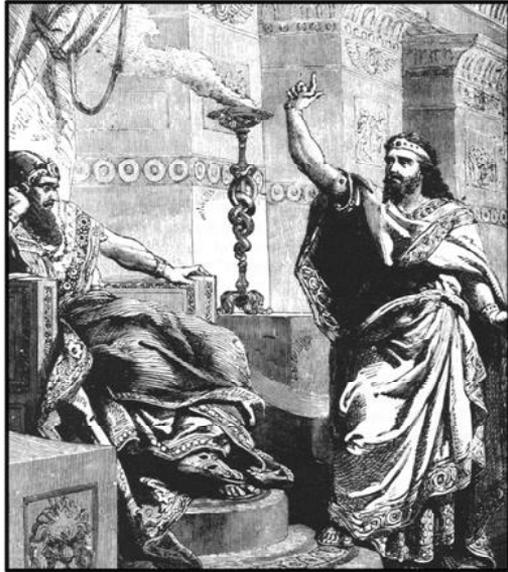
be dissolved in that year, that Christ would then be present as Earth's new Ruler, that the whole planet would be filled with the glory of the Lord—this would have been exciting, encouraging, good news! But, it did not happen. Continued attempts to justify that date, in our view, have been needlessly divisive and fruitless.

In the pages that follow, I propose to demonstrate, step by step, that the 1914 teaching is pitifully flawed—from beginning to end. I want to use wording that is strong enough to make the case, but I assure the reader nothing is intended in an unfriendly way, always bearing in mind the Scriptural admonition to “speak the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15).

NEBUCHADNEZZAR, KING OF BABYLON

We now turn to the book of Daniel, Chapter 4:

Nebuchadnezzar dreamed about an exceedingly tall tree that was chopped down; but the stump and roots were left intact. Other details of the dream spoke of the dew of heaven, beasts of the field, and the passing of seven periods of time.



Artist's conception of Daniel before King Nebuchadnezzar

The “tree” in the dream, according to Daniel, represented Nebuchadnezzar: “It is you, O king” (Dan. 4:22). The cutting down of the tree symbolized Nebuchadnezzar’s fall from power. Being lifted up with pride, he would be abased. He would experience insanity, causing him to think and act like a wild beast. But after “seven times” his mind would be restored

and he would acknowledge the Most High God. As the prophet Daniel explained:

“They shall drive you from men, your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make you eat grass like oxen. They shall wet you with the dew of heaven, and *seven times* shall pass over you, till you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men....And inasmuch as they gave the command to leave the stump and roots of the tree, your kingdom shall be assured to you, after you come to know that Heaven rules” (Dan. 4:25-26 NKJV).

That is the story, familiar to all Bible readers. But, it may be asked, How do Jehovah’s Witnesses get from this setting in ancient Babylon all the way to A.D. 1914? Good question. What Russell taught regarding this can be summed up in the following basic points:

According to Russell, the seven *times* of Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity were seven *years*.

According to Russell, these seven years have a deeper meaning; so figuring the number of days in seven years, a year-for-a-day method is used.

According to Russell, the length of a year should be figured as 360 days, and so seven years would have 2,520 days ($7 \times 360 = 2,520$). Then, figuring a year-for-a-day, the 2,520 days become 2,520 *years*.

According to Russell, the *secular* date of B.C. 536 was the year the Jewish captives were released from Babylon. The 70 years of the Babylon captivity are then added ($536 + 70 = 606$), in order to obtain the beginning date of Gentile rule over them, i.e. 606 B.C. (In time 606 was adjusted to 607 in Watchtower publications, and 536 was changed to 537, but more about that later.)

According to Russell, the 2,520 days, interpreted as 2,520 *years*, would measure to A.D. 1914 ($606 + 1914 = 2,520$).

According to Russell, this period of 2,520 years—from B.C. 606 to A.D. 1914—was what Jesus referred to as the “times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24).

According to Russell, during this period, Jerusalem would be trodden down by Gentiles, that is, would be under continuous Gentile *rule*—until 1914—when, finally, Christ would be made king, the beastly Gentile rule would end, and Christ’s kingdom would reign over the earth.

ASSUMPTIONS!

A major problem with the 1914 teaching is that it requires many *assumptions*. It must be *assumed* that the seven periods of time that Nebuchadnezzar was insane, were *years*—seven years *exactly*. Otherwise the counting will not work.

It must be *assumed* that the days in seven years are to be stretched out on a year-for-a-day scale spanning centuries.

It must be *assumed* that a year should be figured as 360 days—in order to obtain the number 2,520—but then a *different* calendar, a *solar* calendar with 365 days, is used to measure to 1914!

It must be *assumed* that the *secular* date of B.C. 536 that Russell used (to which the 70 years of captivity are added), is precisely correct, despite considerable present-day scholarship to the contrary.

It must be *assumed* that when Jesus spoke of the “times of the Gentiles” he was referring to 2,520 years of Gentile *rule*.

The entire 1914 teaching hinges on the “seven times” of Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity lasting seven YEARS. If those “seven times” were *not* seven YEARS—and seven years *exactly*—the whole teaching crumbles.

Were the seven “times” mentioned in Daniel 4 seven *years*?

The word translated “time” or “times” (*iddan*, H5732 in *Strong’s Concordance*)—used only in Daniel*—is recognized on all sides to mean simply a period of time. As Barnes’ *Notes on the Bible*, says, “...the word may refer to *any* such period [of

* Daniel 2:8,9,21; 3:5,15; 4:16, 23, 25, 32; 7:12, 25.

time], however long or short—a day, a month, a year, or *any* other measure of duration.”

It is generally believed that when *‘iddan* is used in the phrase “a *time* and *times* and half a *time*” (Dan. 7:25), it does indicate a *year*, and so a period of three-and-a-half years. In the book of Revelation the phrase appears to be used interchangeably with 1,260 days and 42 months (cf. Rev. 12:14; 11:2, 3). But as will be noted later, there are reasons to believe this phrase is probably a round number. In any case, to stretch 1,260 *days* into 1,260 *years*, would require another step entirely, one that is not mentioned in the text.

So while *‘iddan*—meaning simply a period of time—*could* mean a year, there is no indication this is the case in Daniel 4. The odds of that, as we shall see, are slim.

If the writer had wanted to use a word that specifically means *year* in Daniel 4:25, he could have done so. Indeed he *did* use this word numerous other places: “In the third *year* of the reign of Jehoiakim...three *years* of training...Daniel continued until the first *year* of King Cyrus” (Dan. 1:1, 5, 21, *etc.*). That word, translated “year,” is #H8141 in *Strong’s Concordance*.

Because *‘iddan* is a word for time—regardless of length—the period during which Nebuchadnezzar was insane is commonly translated as “seven periods of time” or “seven seasons” (NLT, ESV, NASB, HCSB, NET, GWT, NIV, *etc.*). Even the *New World Translation* (published by the Watchtower Society), does not insert the word “years,” but (quite honestly) uses “seven times,” the same as the KJV, NKJV, *etc.*

The scholarly *Pulpit Commentary* (on Daniel 4:16)—with no doctrine to uphold on this point, one way or another—says that *‘iddan* means no more than “seasons” or “points” of time, adding that “it is *purely arbitrary to fix the meaning as years.*”

If we count the “seven times” as seven *seasons*—figuring four seasons in a year—this would work out to less than *two* years as the length of Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity. That would be based on the way *we* figure seasons today.

However, the Babylonians (as well as the Hebrews) figured only two *seasons* in a year: summer and winter (cf. Gen. 8:22; Psa. 74:17; Zech. 14:8). By this counting, seven seasons would fit within a period of *four* years. This brings us to the words of Nebuchadnezzar found on an ancient inscription:

“For *four years* the residence of my kingdom did not delight my heart. In no one of my possessions did I erect any important building by my might. I did not put up buildings in Babylon for myself and the honor of my name. In the worship of Merodach my god I did not sing his praise, nor did I provide his altar with sacrifices, nor clean the canals.”

While Nebuchadnezzar did not use the word “insanity” in this quotation—perhaps because of his own personal ego—*clearly*, for some reason, his activities were interrupted during four years. His insanity would provide a reason.

In a comment on the above quotation, *Halley’s Bible Handbook* (1924, p. 315) says the “seven times” should here be understood as “seasons.” Because the Babylonians only counted summer and winter, seven seasons or three-and-a-half years, would fall within the four year timeframe indicated. Certainly—if correct—this would rule out seven “times” meaning seven *years*.

The word *‘iddan* was also used for a *point* in time. In Babylon, for example, at whatever “time” [*‘iddan*] certain music was played, all were to fall down and worship the Golden Image that Nebuchadnezzar set up (Daniel 3:5,15). This, a mere *point* in time, certainly did not mean a year.

Still another variation: The word translated “times” in Daniel is from a root corresponding to H5708 in *Strong’s Concordance*. It appears one place: Isaiah 64:6. Here—though euphemistically translated “filthy rags” (KJV, NKJV, NIV)—other translations, including *The New World Translation*, correctly say: “...all our acts of righteousness are like a garment for periods of menstruation.” Thus, this word is closely linked with a *month*.

After a discussion of Nebuchadnezzar’s illness from a medical point of view, the *Pulpit Commentary* says, “The ‘seven times’ certainly *did not mean seven years* for recovery from that form

of insanity; that is, acute mania....Seven *months* is a far more likely period.” In agreement, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (article: “Nebuchadnezzar”), says it is likely that the “seven times” of Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity were seven *months*.

The point is: If the “seven times” were ANYTHING other than seven full YEARS, the 1914 teaching will not work.

HOW MANY DAYS IN A YEAR?

Looking again at Daniel 4, let’s suppose (for the moment) that the seven *times* of Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity were indeed seven *years*. A *lunar* calendar, based on the cycles of the Moon, has 354 days in a year. A *solar* calendar, based on the revolution of the Earth around the Sun, has 365 days in a year. Which one of these did Russell use to come up with the 2,520 days? *Neither!*

Russell figured a year as having 360 days! And so: $360 \times 7 = 2,520$.

He arrived at this number by comparing verses in Revelation in which 1,260 days and 42 months appear to be used interchangeably (Rev. 11:2,3; 12:6; 13:5). This works out to 30 days in a month. So a year, having 12 months, would consist of 360 days.

What Russell failed to acknowledge is that these numbers in the book of Revelation must have been intended as *round* numbers—360 days being roughly half way between the 354 days of a lunar year and the 365 days of a solar year. Round numbers like this, especially when embedded in apocalyptic style literature, can provide a general meaning, but stop short of defining an exact day or hour.

Biblically speaking, a month was figured from the appearance of one new moon to the next, the word “month” meaning “moon.” Figured by the Moon, some months have 30 days, others have 29 days. But biblical writers—apparently unconcerned about this technicality—simply *rounded off* the days of a month to 30 days. For example:

During the time of the flood, 150 days are mentioned as five months, implying the writer of Genesis figured 30 days to a month

(cf. Gen. 7:11, 24; 8:3, 4). At the time of Moses, mourning for a month appears to mean mourning for 30 days (Num. 20:29; Deut. 34:8; 21:13). The mention of 180 days at the time of Ahasuerus probably implies the passing of six 30-day months (Esther 1:4). A law in effect for 30 days in Babylon, seems to be based on figuring 30 days to a month (Dan. 6:7, 12). This was also the case with 42 months designated as 1,260 days, as mentioned.

Figuring 30 days to a month was a *round* number. The proof is simple: 12 times 30 days is 360 days; whereas the *actual* days in a year are 365.

Something else should be noticed—biblical writers spoke of 12 months in a year:

“Solomon had *twelve* officers...each man his *month in a year*” (1 Kings 4:7). *Twelve* military leaders “went out month by month throughout *all the months of the year*” (see 1 Chron. 27:1-15). The tree of life is described as bearing *twelve* manner of fruits, yielding fruit *every month* (Rev. 22:2; cf. Ezek. 47:12). But even figuring *twelve* months in a year was a round number; for, by Jewish reckoning, some years have 13 months!

It has sometimes been supposed that figuring 360 days to a year is based on the Jewish calendar. But, as can be easily verified, the Jewish year has 354 days. In order to ensure that festivals will occur in their proper seasons (Passover in Spring, Tabernacles in Fall, etc.), a thirteenth month (Second Adar) *must* be added every two or three years. This adjustment makes up for the 11 day difference between 354 and 365. This happens, by calculation, seven years out of nineteen. *Those* years have 384 days!

Nevertheless, Russell used the number 360, multiplied it by seven to get 2,520 days, and figured these days as *years*! But then what? In order to make these years measure to 1914, the rule was changed—midstream, as it were. Instead of figuring 360 days to a year, *he switched to a year of 365 days*!

In 2,520 years, this difference of 5 days a year would amount to over 34 years! So much for the accuracy of 1914.

I have yet to talk with any Jehovah's Witnesses who can explain this discrepancy. When asked, it would appear they did not know what I was asking, or maybe did not want to know. After all, the date of 1914 is considered an *essential* of their belief system and is not to be questioned.

While the Scriptures often give precise, exact numbers, *round numbers* are *very common* from Genesis to Revelation (cf. Gen. 38:24; Rev. 8:1):

“about three months,” “about two thousand cubits,” “about two or three thousand men,” “about a thousand men and women,” “about ten years,” “about twenty-five men,” “about 62 years old,” “about the ninth hour,” “about 2,000 swine,” “about three months,” “about eight days later,” “about 25 or 30 furlongs,” “about 120 disciples,” “about three hours,” “about 450 years,” “about the space of half an hour,” etc.

One can take a round number (in contrast to an exact number), multiply it as many times as he may desire, the result will still only be a round number—obviously nothing on which to base a doctrine.

YEARS—whether mentioned in the Scriptures or history—are commonly expressed in *round numbers*.

When we read that the Israelites “ate manna *forty years*” (Exod. 16:35), this is a round number. They left Egypt at the time of the Passover. Forty years later, upon entering the Promised Land, they observed the Passover, and the manna ceased (Josh. 5:10-12). *But*, they did not begin receiving the manna until “the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt” (Exod. 16:1), so their eating manna did not span a *full forty years*.

At the time of Elijah, we read that it did not rain for *three years*. This is evidently a round number, for in another place it is spelled out as *three years and six months* (James 5:17; Luke 4:25; 1 Kings 18:1).

The Scriptures say David reigned in Hebron *seven years*, a round number, for in another place we read it was *seven years and six months* (2 Samuel 2:11; 1 Kings 2:11). The total time of

David's reign, including in Jerusalem, was said to be *forty years*; though it was actually *thirty-nine years and six months* (1 Chron. 29:27; 3:4). It is agreed, on all sides, that differences like these are easily explained because numbers have been rounded off.

A round number is used regarding the building of Solomon's Temple: "...In the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Zif, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the LORD....And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished....*So he was seven years in building it*" (1 Kings 6:1, 37, 38). Thus a period of approximately six years and seven months is rounded off to seven years.

Fausset's Bible Dictionary (article: "Israel"), provides a list of the kings of *Israel* and how long each ruled, based on information provided in the Bible. In a parallel column, the kings of *Judah* are likewise listed. When each column is added up, there is a difference of 13 years. It is pointed out that this difference "is due probably to *round numbers being used by the writers for exact ones, not specifying the months*" (emphasis in the original).

Pastor Russell himself was aware that years are sometimes expressed in round numbers: "Zedekiah is said to have reigned eleven years (1 Chron. 36:11; Jer. 52:1); yet, from verses 3 to 7 of the latter chapter, it is clear that his actual reign was ten years four months and nine days." (*The Time is at Hand*, p. 48).

But with the 1914 teaching, the possibility of a *round* number is out of the question! Nebuchadnezzar's "seven times" must not only be figured as seven years, but as seven years EXACTLY. If, for example, the time period was even 20 days less than seven years—using the year-for-a-day method, those 20 *days* would become 20 *years*, running out in 1894, not 1914.

While seven is an *actual* number, it has also been widely used to signify *completeness* or *totality*, not requiring mathematical *exactness*. The *Pulpit Commentary* (on Daniel 4:6) explains that "*seven*, with the Babylonians, as with most other Semites, is a *round number* of sacred import, and therefore may not be pressed."

Some scriptural examples in which “seven” is not necessarily limited to seven *exactly*, include the following:

Sevenfold punishment on anyone who killed Cain (Gen. 4:15); enemies flee *seven* ways (Deut. 28:7); deliverance from *seven* troubles (Job 5:19); *seven* wicked spirits enter the body (Matt. 12:45); a righteous man may fall *seven* times, but rises again (Prov. 24:16); *seven* abominations are in the heart of a wicked man (Prov. 26:25); praise offered to God *seven* times a day (Ps. 119:164); silver purified *seven* times is thoroughly purified (Psa. 12:6); *seven* women take hold of one man (Isa. 4:1); if one sins against another *seven* times in a day, and if he repents *seven* times, forgiveness is to be granted; and not just *seven* times, but *seventy* times *seven* (Luke 17:4; Matt. 18:21,22), etc.

But, more directly linked with our present study, we look again at the book of Daniel:

In his attempt to destroy Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, Nebuchadnezzar ordered the fiery furnace to be heated *seven* times hotter than usual (Dan. 3:19). It is difficult to envision someone with a thermometer (had such even been available) trying to make sure the furnace was *exactly* seven times hotter! But, if we regard seven as the number of *completeness* or *totality*, to heat a furnace seven times hotter would simply mean it was heated as hot as possible!

Accordingly, in Daniel 4 (the very next chapter) the “seven” times that passed over Nebuchadnezzar could mean his insanity lasted *to the full extent required*—long enough for him to come to his senses and acknowledge the true God. And, indeed, when he was restored, these were his words:

“Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and his ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down” (Dan. 4:37).

Considering how wicked Nebuchadnezzar had been, this transformation was glorious, a grand testimony indeed!—certainly suf-

ficient reason for it to be included in the biblical account. To suggest that an extended meaning is required—stretching clear down to the year 1914—is, in our view, untenable.

Jesus was obviously familiar with the book of Daniel (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14); yet there is not the slightest hint that he believed Daniel provided a time line extending to 1914. Granted this is an argument from silence, and so not conclusive within itself. But, more directly, we have the testimony of Scripture itself as to *when* the events surrounding Nebuchadnezzar were fulfilled:

“ALL this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar....That very hour the word was FULFILLED concerning Nebuchadnezzar” (Dan. 4:28, 33). There is no indication the fulfillment would take 2,520 years.

So two conflicting positions are before us. The Scriptures say the seven times were *fulfilled* at the time of Nebuchadnezzar; the Watchtower says the fulfillment was in 1914.

TWO FULFILLMENTS?

In an attempt to justify this discrepancy, the Watchtower explanation is that there were “TWO fulfillments”—one at the time of Nebuchadnezzar and *another* in 1914! (*The Watchtower*, November 1, 2014, p. 9)

Based on our own studies of the Scriptures, the *two* fulfillment method should only be used if there are solid reasons to do so. The doctrines and dates that Pastor Russell came up with by using this method do not, in our view, meet that criteria. Consider the following *summary*, the full account of which may be seen in *The Time is at Hand*, pp. 246, 247. In 1889, Russell wrote:

There was an Advent Movement at the time of Jesus’ birth; 30 years later, at his baptism, he was anointed as Messiah. There was an Advent Movement in 1844; so 30 years later, the time of Christ’s Presence to awaken and test the church came, in October **1874**.

In A.D. 33, at the close of Christ’s three-and-a-half year ministry, he assumed his power and title as King. So three and a half years after 1874, he became King in **1878**.

From Jacob’s death to the death of Christ in A.D. 33 was 1,845 years. So 1,854 years from Christ’s death marks the time his reign began, in **1878**.

The temple at Jerusalem was destroyed 37 years after Christ’s death in A.D. 33. So 37 years after **1878** the entire destruction of nominal Christendom will be accomplished, by **1915**. (Here Russell allowed some additional months beyond October 1914 for this to be completed.)

This method of “two fulfillments” is so disjointed and flawed, much of it is rejected (and correctly so) by Jehovah’s Witnesses today. Yet they still appeal to the idea of “two fulfillments” regarding the “seven times” of Nebuchadnezzar.



Over and over in Russell’s writings, he stated that the starting point for the 2,520 years was B.C. 606. (See illustration above.) But all Watchtower publications now—and for years—have given the year as 607. Apparently Russell did not understand there is no year “0.” In counting from a B.C. year to an A.D. year, *one* year must be *subtracted*. This is common knowledge, easily verified, and is sometimes illustrated this way:

From 1 January **500** B.C. to 1 January A.D. **500** would seem like 1,000 years. But it is 999 years. ($500 + 500 = 1,000$, minus 1 = 999). There is no year “0.”

So in the case before us, from 606 B.C. to A.D. 1914 would be 2,519 years—not 2,520 years ($606 + 1914 = 2,520$, minus 1 = 2,519.)

There can be little doubt that Russell's oft-repeated miscalculation regarding the year 606 B.C. was an embarrassment among the Watchtower leadership. Finally, in the 1940s, they changed the year 606 to 607 in their publications.

In order for the long-held 2,520 years to remain intact, an extra year *had* to be added—at one end or the other. Either 606 had to be changed to 607, *or* 1914 would have to be changed to 1915. Smoothly, it would appear, the folks at the Watchtower Society decided to replace Russell's 606 mistake with 607—and, in the process, did it *on the B.C. side*. Why there? The answer seems obvious: This change would be less noticeable, less suspicious, *and save the year 1914!*

But this did not solve the problem entirely. The secular date of B.C. 536 upon which Russell built so much, would have to be changed! He had written:

“B.C. 536 was the year in which the seventy years of Jerusalem's desolation ended and the restoration of the Jews began, it follows that their kingdom was overthrown just seventy years before B.C. 536, i.e., 536 plus 70, or B.C. 606. This gives us the date of the beginning of the Times of the Gentiles—B.C. 606.” (p. 80, *The Time is at Hand*).

So now the change from B.C. 606 to 607 would require that the 70 years ended in B.C. 537!—not 536. How would making this change be “explained”? Perhaps the Israelite captives were set free during one year, but did not get back into their homeland until the following year?

Someone might say, “Well, that's only a difference of a year; no need to split hairs over a year.” We agree. The issue is not about *one year*. The real issue is about 2,520 *years!*

While the writers of the Watchtower publications give the impression that *they* use *Bible* chronology—not secular chronology—the fact is, the teaching about 1914 is dependent on a *secular* date. Carefully worded statements fail to admit this. The Watchtower publication *Reasoning from the Scriptures* (p. 96), speaking of the Old Testament destruction of Jerusalem, says:

“Reliable Bible chronology indicates that this took place 70 years before 537 B.C.E., the year in which the Jews returned from captivity; that is, it took place by early October of 607 B.C.E. (Jer. 29:10; Dan. 9:2).” *

These verses—Jer. 29:10 and Dan. 9:2—do indeed mention 70 years. But the real issue is *the total dependence on the secular date to which the 70 years are added.*

In his large, scholarly book, *The Gentile Times Reconsidered*, Carl Olof Jonsson, a former Jehovah’s Witness himself, presents many lines of evidence showing that the secular date of 537 B.C.E. is incorrect. Consequently, adding 70 years to an incorrect date will not produce a correct date.

Even *how* the period of 70 years is applied can make a difference. The Watchtower *New World Translation*, in agreement with the *King James Version*, uses the phrase “seventy years AT Babylon” (Jer. 29:10). But a number of translations convey the meaning of “seventy years FOR Babylon.” This seemingly slight difference can impact the chronology involved, but those details are beyond the scope of our present study.

I am no expert on ancient chronology, nor would I consider it of great importance to spend countless days and hours—even years (as some have)—trying to unravel all the variations and difficulties. But suppose after many years of labor one could finally prove that 606 B.C. (or 607) was indeed correct. The road to 1914 would still be non-existent.

Time has been figured from such events as when a king began to rule (1 Kings 16:8), a major earthquake (Amos 1:1; Zech. 14:5), the length of a captivity (Ezek. 40:1), a person’s birth (Gen. 7:11), the Exodus (1 Kings 6:1), etc. Dates like these are floating dates, meaningful at the time, but which do not provide any consistent, unbroken link to modern times.

We noticed earlier that the length of a year, by Jewish reckoning, can vary from 12 to 13 months. There is also a variable about

*** B.C.E (Before the Common Era) and C.E. (Common Era), now used in Watchtower publications, are simply the alternate designations corresponding to B.C. and A.D.**

when a new year *begins*. Figured one way, a year begins in the *Fall* (Exodus 23:16); by another, a year begins in the *Spring* (Num. 9:5).

Jesus spoke of “twelve hours” in a day (John 11:9). At that time, without clocks and watches, a day—from sunrise to sunset—was figured as twelve hours whether summer (when days are longer) or winter (when days are shorter). This amounted to *variable* hours, so that in summer, an “hour” could be as long as 71 minutes, and as short as 49 minutes in winter.

As to the Roman calendar (the basis for our calendar today)—*of which the year 1914 is a part*—back around 46 B.C., it had slipped farther and farther behind, so that harvest festivals did not come at harvest time. To bring the calendar back into alignment, a transitional year of *445 days* was inserted. It has been called “The Longest Year in History.”

That adjustment served well for a long time, but by the middle of the sixteenth century, *ten days* needed to be dropped. When this was done, Thursday, October 4, 1582 was followed by Friday, October 15, 1582.

Another variable can stem from the fact that ancient manuscripts are vulnerable to copyist errors, especially regarding numbers. At one point Russell himself had occasion to point this out by comparing 2 Chronicles 36:9 with 2 Kings 24:8: One says Jehoiachin was *eight* years old when he began to reign in Jerusalem, the other says he was *eighteen*. (*The Time is at Hand*, p. 52, 53).

AS TIME GOES BY...

When we weigh all the many variables about how TIME has been figured, it does raise the question as to why a doctrine should be built on something this uncertain.

Insisting on an exact date is not important—*unless* we have built a doctrine on it. It is the Watchtower that has a problem and labors long to justify an untrue, unscriptural teaching. Most Christians are content with serving the Lord, seeking to do his will day by day, leaving the unrevealed times and seasons in *his* hands (Acts 1:7).

Jehovah's Witnesses now recognize that Russell's chronology was flawed regarding a number of dates he set, which raises an unavoidable question: Why trust him regarding 1914?

Pastor Russell, claiming biblical support, said 6,000 years from the creation of Adam ended in 1872:

“Six thousand years from the creation of Adam ended with A.D. 1872”; Adam was created in “the year 4129, according to the Bible record, thus showing *the year 1872 A.D. to be the year of the world 6000*, and 1873 A.D. the commencement of the seventh thousand-year period.” (*The Time is at Hand*, pp. 53, 54).

The Watchtower Society later taught the end of the 6,000 years was *not* 1872, but would be 1975. Quite a difference! The May 1, 1968 issue of *The Watchtower*, which I have before me, says:

“To calculate where man is in the stream of time...we need to determine how long a time has elapsed from the year of Adam and Eve's creation in 4026 B.C.E.” The article goes on to say that by the autumn of 1975, according to “God's timetable,” mankind would be uplifted from 6,000 years of misery, toil, trouble, sickness, and death suffered under Satan's rule.

Two points stand out. What “*Russell said the Bible said*” about chronology, was rejected later by what “*the Watchtower said the Bible said*” about chronology! More importantly, both Russell and the Watchtower were wrong about what the Bible said, as the passing of time has thoroughly demonstrated.

CAMERON AND JON

An article in the November 1, 2014 issue of *The Watchtower* (pp. 8-10) presents a conversation one of Jehovah's Witnesses might have with a neighbor. The Witness, named **Cameron**, is at the home of a man named **Jon**. The subject discussed by the two men provides the title for the article: “When Did God's Kingdom Begin Ruling?” After mentioning the “seven times” of Nebuchadnezzar's insanity, Cameron says there *must* be a larger fulfillment, much longer than seven literal years. **Quote:**

Jon: Why do you say that?

Cameron: For one thing, recall that the seven times began when Jerusalem was destroyed in 607 B.C.E. If we start counting from that year, seven literal years would take us to the year 600 B.C.E. But nothing significant happened in that year....So, rather than being literal years, the seven times *must* involve a longer period of time....If we apply the rule of a day for a year, the seven times would amount to 2,520 *years*. Counting forward from 607 B.C.E., 2,520 years takes us to the year 1914. That's how we arrive at 1914 as the year that the seven times ended, the start of Jesus' rule as King."

Let's break this down and take a closer look:

Quote: "The seven times began when Jerusalem was destroyed in 607 B.C.E." Cameron evidently assumes Jon will take this statement as factual—and then his explanation can build on this. But the seven times had to do with Nebuchadnezzar's insanity, and no one claims to know any dates for this. Cameron has now moved the period of "seven times" clear away from Nebuchadnezzar and placed it in a different setting—that the seven times began when Jerusalem was destroyed.

Cameron does not tell Jon the 607 B.C.E. date is not supported by present-day scholarship. Nor does he explain that the 1914 claim is *totally* dependent on this date.

Quote: "If we start counting from that year [607 B.C.E.], seven literal *years* would take us to the year 600 B.C.E., but nothing significant happened in that year..." Of course there are seven years from 600 to 607, but that misses the point. Notice how Cameron has now inserted the word "years" into the discussion—the period of seven times has been smoothly changed into seven *years!* There is no biblical proof that Nebuchadnezzar's insanity lasted seven *years*. But Cameron *has* to imply *years* are meant or he will never get to 1914.

Quote: "So, rather than being literal years, the seven times *must* involve a longer period of time." Notice that Cameron uses

the word “must”! There are numbers within Scripture, as all agree, that were never intended in a *literal* sense. Does this mean these also “must involve a longer period of time”? By that reasoning, or lack thereof, all kinds of oddball theories could develop.

That “longer period of time,” Cameron explains to Jon, is figured on the year-for-a-day scale:

Quote: “...the seven times would amount to 2,520 *years*. Counting forward from 607 B.C.E., 2,520 years takes us to the year 1914...the start of Jesus’ rule as King.” We note, in passing, that Cameron failed to inform Jon this only works when a year is figured as having *360 days*, and then counting the years to 1914 by using a calendar with *365 days*!

In the article about Cameron and Jon, two biblical references are cited in which a year-for-a-day was used (Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:5, 6). While these are, of course, valid scriptures, there is a problem: There is nothing in *these* verses—not even a hint—that would in any way link them with the passage about Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity.

YEAR-FOR-A-DAY

The year-for-a-day method became quite popular in the 1800s. There were things that the Scriptures implied would happen *soon*. But centuries had now passed. To many Christians, of various persuasions, it *seemed* like a viable solution—to figure a year-for-a-day. These were not bad people.

Even Adam Clarke (normally more careful), writing in 1825, using the year-for-a-day method, suggested the Islamic religion would cease to prevail by A.D. 1902. How wrong that was! (See *Clarke’s Commentary* on Daniel 12:11).

Soon numerous dates were floating around, based on the year-for-a-day method. It was not uncommon for the beginning date—as for the 1,260 days (figured as *years*)—to be arbitrarily chosen after the fact. Russell said the 1,260 years ended in 1799, Grattan Guinness 1793, and Alexander Hislop 1866! I am not aware that *any* of these dates proved true in any convincing or satisfactory manner.

By using the year-for-a-day method, William Miller (1782-1849)—from whom the Adventists trace their beginnings as a movement—set the date of October 22, 1844 for Christ’s return. This was based on figuring the number 2,300 as *years* (Dan. 8:14). But that must have been “Miller Time”—not *God’s* time. It did not happen and came to be known in history as “The Great Disappointment.”

Despite this failure—which occurred a few years before Russell was born—Russell was heavily influenced by the Adventist movement which, as he phrased it, was “led mainly by a Baptist brother named William Miller.” (p. 240, *The Time is at Hand.*) Some find it interesting that he referred to a Baptist as a brother! The organization that grew out of Russell’s organization would, in time, become much more sectarian!

The idea of taking 2,520 days, and counting them as years—from 606 B.C. to A.D. 1914—did not start with Russell. He learned it from Nelson H. Barbour, whose roots were in the Adventist movement. In 1877 Barbour wrote a book on the subject called *THREE WORLDS*. Russell (whose name also appears on the book) provided funds for its publication. But Russell and Barbour parted ways a year later. In 1879 Russell began to publish his own magazine, *Zion’s Watch Tower and Herald of Christ’s Presence*, in which he continued to promote 1914.



Nelson H. Barbour

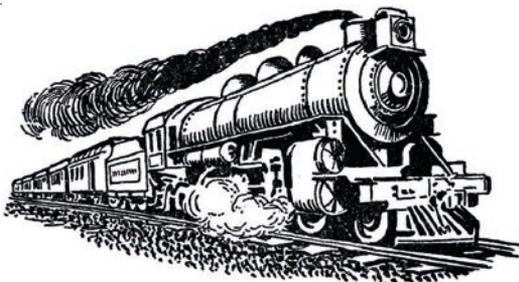
Back at the time, we can understand why there were Christian people who were intrigued with the 1914 teaching—especially as the time drew near. Some had left other churches for various reasons. The Watchtower organization seemed to offer a neglected truth they had not heard before. It was exciting to think that wars would cease, sickness would be obliterated, righteousness would

prevail, the glory of Jehovah would cover the earth, and paradise would be restored—in 1914!

But not every doctrine that *sounds good*, is *good sound doctrine*. Using the year-for-a day method to set the 1914 date was obviously flawed. Fortunately, believing in the blessings of Christ's kingdom—as dedicated believers have for centuries—is not now, and never was, dependent on 1914.

RUSSELL'S DEATH

Pastor Russell lived long enough to see the failure of the 1914 date. Two years later he died on a Santa Fe train near Pampa, Texas, on October 31, 1916. During that two year interval he admitted, to some extent, that events had not happened as quickly as he supposed, *but refused to give up on 1914*. What is even more ironic is that over a century has now passed. Excuse after excuse has been made for the 1914 date, it is still being promoted door to door, and in Watchtower publications!



Under the stress of non-fulfillment, there were those who desperately, it would appear, needed to find some significance for the year 1914. Because this was the year World War I began (though the United States did not enter the war until 1917), efforts were made to highlight this as a year of *great historical significance*.

Was 1914 a significant year? Perhaps; but no more than many other years that stand out for various reasons: 1776, 1941, 1945, 1948, 1969, 2000, etc. It is no feat to quote some historian who has zeroed in on a particular year as being significant.

But the attempt to make 1914 a year of great significance—because a great war broke out at that time—was actually *contrary* to what had been taught earlier.

Being aware of wars and commotions in various parts of the world—in the late 1800s—Russell wrote that “the ‘battle of the great day of God Almighty’ (Rev. 16:14)” had *already* begun. “We are in the very midst of those events, and that ‘the Great Day of His Wrath is come’,” and would end “with the complete overthrow of earth’s present rulership.” (*The Time is at Hand*, p. 101).

Russell wrote: “The time of trouble or ‘day of wrath’ which began October 1874 will end October 1914.” (p. 604, *The Day of Vengeance*). “Bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the beginning, but for the *end* of the time of trouble.” (*Zion’s Watch Tower*, 1894, July 15, p. 226).

But when that did not happen, an *opposite* meaning developed: that the outbreak of World War I was proof that 1914 was right after all!

On a side note, while there is no doubt that World War I was a horrible time, there were more American casualties in the Civil War (when Russell was yet a young man) than World War I and World War II, combined!

Dates that Russell earmarked as significant include 1799, 1844, 1872, 1874, 1878, and, of course 1914. After his death, still more dates were set, causing the organization—known since 1931 as Jehovah’s Witnesses—to receive an award:

**THE ORGANIZATION WITH THE MOST
FAILED DATES—EVER!**

Some of those dates were really bizarre, like the year 1925. According to Joseph Rutherford (Russell’s successor), Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other Old Testament heroes, were expected to be raised from the dead and appear again on earth in that year—in San Diego!

Rutherford taught that 3,500 years (seventy jubilees of fifty years—Lev. 25:11), would measure from the time the Israelites entered Canaan to the time of the resurrection: 1925. In his 1920 book, *Millions Now Living Will Never Die!* (p. 88) he wrote:

“The chief thing to be restored is the human race to life; and since other Scriptures definitely fix the fact that there will be a resurrection of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and other faithful ones of old, and that these will have the first favor, *we may expect 1925 to witness the return of these faithful men of Israel from the condition of death*, being resurrected and fully restored to perfect humanity and made the visible, legal representatives of the new order of things on earth.”



Joseph Rutherford

The year 1925 did not bring about the resurrection of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but it was believed the appearance of these Old Testament princes would happen *soon*. A beautiful home was built and held in trust for them, *Beth-Sarim*, “House of the Princes,” at 4440 Braeburn Road, San Diego, California.



Meanwhile this served as a residence for Joseph Rutherford, Watchtower President. In an interview with *Time Magazine* (March 31, 1930), he said: “I have purposely landscaped the place with palm and olive trees so that these princes of the universe will feel at home.”

A story in the *San Diego Sun* (January 9, 1931) pointed out that the *Beth-Sarim* mansion has “the most modern appliances that science has devised” and in the garage “stands a new, yellow

16-cylinder [Cadillac] coupe which will be turned over to the rulers along with all the personal property on the place.”

Soon people in San Diego—and other places—were asking: What will they look like? How will they be dressed? Will it be a challenge for them to adjust to modern appliances, flush toilets, electric lights, telephones, radios, trains, and airplanes? Some found it difficult to picture them driving (or riding) in an automobile up and down the streets of San Diego.

The deed to the property is both interesting and unique, easily viewed online. The property was held in trust for the Old Testament heroes (those in Hebrews 11 are specifically mentioned), with provision for Joseph Rutherford to use it as a residence. Indeed this was the place of his death in 1942. Six years later the house was sold.

Following Rutherford’s death, his associate, William P. Heath, Jr. (an heir to the Coca-Cola fortune), had an occasion to speak before a court. His testimony, as recorded in the local newspaper, included the statement: “Further proof that these princes will *shortly* take office upon earth as perfect men is found in the prophecy of Daniel....we may expect to see Daniel and the other mentioned princes *any day now!*”

Numerous times I have had the opportunity to speak at churches in the San Diego area. On one of those occasions, I drove to the property. It so happened that a lady who lived there was out in front. Probably realizing I was interested in the house, she greeted me in a friendly manner and we spoke briefly. I asked if she was aware of the history of the house. She was. I asked if she had seen Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob there. She had not.

When, today, the Witnesses from the Kingdom Hall knock on the door at *Beth-Sarim*, I wonder what thoughts go through their minds. I don’t suppose any of them actually expect Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob to open the door!

There can be little doubt that the *Beth-Sarim* mansion in San Diego has been an embarrassment to the Jehovah’s Witnesses—something they would rather not talk about. This is understandable,

and in all fairness, probably *all* religious denominations have things in their past they would rather not talk about! They, too, have had their share of scandals, traditions that were fruitless, or extreme views they later sought to modify.

“TIMES OF THE GENTILES”

Writing in the late 1800s, Russell said: “The Bible evidence is *clear* and *strong* that the ‘Times of the Gentiles’ is a period of 2,520 years, from the year B.C. 606 to and including 1914.” (p. 79, *The Time is at Hand*).

There is only *one* verse that uses the phrase “times of the Gentiles,” Luke 21:24, and it says *absolutely nothing* about 2,520 years. How could this possibly be *Bible* evidence that is *clear and strong*?

Nevertheless, according to Russell, the times of the Gentiles began back in the Old Testament when Jerusalem was destroyed and the people were taken into Babylon. He goes on to say that “the restoration at the end of the seventy years in Babylon was not a release from Gentile rule; for they were a tributary people *ever after that*.” (*The Time is a Hand*, 92, 93).

But the fact is, the Israelites were under Gentile rule—were a “tributary people”—for a number of years BEFORE Jerusalem was destroyed:

“Then the king of Egypt made...Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim” (2 Chron. 36:4). Later, “Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his vassal for three years....” (2 Kings 24:1). Still later, “the king of Babylon made Mattaniah...king...and changed his name to Zedekiah” (2 Kings 24:17); and so we read about “king Zedekiah...whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon *made king* in the land of Judah...” (Jer. 37:1; Ezek. 17:16); etc.

These things happened BEFORE the destruction of Jerusalem. This deals havoc to the *beginning* point of the Watchtower teaching about 2,520 years.

Something else should be carefully noted. Writing in 1899, Russell said:

“The restoration at the end of the seventy years in Babylon was not a release from Gentile *rule*; for they were a tributary people *ever after that*....our Lord declared that they would CONTINUE to be trodden down until the Times of the Gentiles expired....the dominion of the Gentiles has been CONTINUOUS since B.C. 606.” (pp. 92, 93, *The Time is at Hand*).

But was Gentile rule “continuous” for all those years? *No*.

It is true that Israel came under Gentile rule—by Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and finally Rome. But at the time of the Maccabees, Israel became an independent sovereign nation, and was *not* ruled over by a Gentile power for nearly a century.

Beginning with The Maccabean Revolt, led by Mattathias of the priestly Hasmonean family, and then by his son Judah the Maccabee (“The Hammer”), the Jews rose up in revolt. Historians have called it “one of the most heroic feats in all of history.” They entered Jerusalem and purified the temple. Those events are commemorated each year by the festival of Hanukkah. Further Hasmonean victories allowed Judea to extend its boundaries not far short of Solomon’s realm. Life flourished with wealth and prosperity.

Around B.C. 142 the Greeks signed a peace treaty with Simon, the last survivor of the five sons of Mattathias:

“[In that year] *the yoke of the Gentiles was taken off from Israel.*” Let’s not read over this: “The yoke of the Gentiles was taken off from Israel”!

“And the people of Israel began to write in the instruments, and public records, ‘The first year under Simon the high priest, the great captain and prince of the Jews’....They entered into [Jerusalem]...with thanksgiving, and branches of palm trees, and harps, and cymbals, and psalteries, and hymns, and canticles, because *the great enemy was destroyed out of Israel.* And he ordained that these days should be kept every year with gladness....

“And all the land of Juda was at rest all the days of Simon, and he sought the good of his nation...and every man tilled his land with peace: and the land of Juda yielded her increase...the fame of his glory was renowned even to the end of the earth. He made peace in the land, and Israel rejoiced with great joy. And every man sat under his vine, and under his fig tree: and there was none to make them afraid. There was none left in the land to fight against them” (1 Machabees 13:41,42, 51, 52; 14:4-12).

As a memorial to this great achievement, the following words were inscribed on tables of brass and mounted on Mount Zion:

“Simon the son of Mathathias...and his brethren have put themselves in danger, and resisted the enemies of their nation, for the maintenance of their holy places, and the law: and have raised their nation to great glory....*their enemies desired to tread down and destroy their country*, and to stretch forth their hands against their holy places. Then Simon resisted and fought for his nation...and in his days things prospered in his hands, so that the heathens [Gentiles] were taken away out of their country, and they also that were in the city of David in *Jerusalem*...and he raised up the walls of Jerusalem” (1 Machabees 14:29-37).

The wording used here should be carefully noted: Gentile “enemies” of the Jewish nation desired to “tread down and destroy” their country, including “Jerusalem.” But Jerusalem was *not* trodden down of the Gentiles during that period because of the godly leadership of Simon! “The yoke of the Gentiles was taken off from Israel.”

A section of the *NIV Study Bible*, “The Time between the Testaments,” mentions the Maccabean revolt that resulted in “the *independence* of Judah until the Romans took control in 63 B.C.” When that happened, according to the *New World Encyclopedia* (article: “Maccabees”), it brought “an end to a *century* of Jewish self-governance.”

While historians may not agree on exactly how long Israel was an independent Jewish Kingdom—nor do they need to—the fact remains this Jewish sovereignty lasted many years.

How does this impact the 1914 teaching? It is devastated. Unless Gentile rule was “continuous”—as claimed—the 2,520 years (even if using a year-for-a-day was valid in this case) would not measure to 1914.

Actually, the oft-repeated Watchtower wording—that the “times of the Gentiles” refers to Gentile RULE—is misleading. The one verse that mentions the times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24), says nothing about who would *rule* Jerusalem. It speaks of Jerusalem being *trodden down* by Gentiles. The two terms are not the same. Consider the following verses, noting how the term “trodden down” is used in Scripture:

“Jerusalem...shall be TRODDEN DOWN; and I will lay it waste...Houses shall be desolate...my people are gone into captivity” (Isaiah 5:1-13).

“The drunkards of Ephraim shall be TRODDEN UNDER FEET...and when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then [Judah] shall be TRODDEN DOWN by it” (Isaiah 28:3, 18).

“Our adversaries have TRODDEN DOWN thy sanctuary” (Isa. 63:18).

“I will send [the Assyrians] against a hypocritical nation...to TREAD DOWN like the mire of the streets” (Isa. 10:6).

“They have TRODDEN my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness” (Jer. 12:10).

“Judah is gone into captivity...her gates are desolate...Jerusalem has grievously sinned...the Lord has TRODDEN under foot all my mighty men...the daughter of Judah *as a winepress*” (Lam 1:3-15).

Clearly to be “trodden down” describes *hostile, aggressive, destructive* action. Simply being under Gentile *rule* does not have this meaning.

Even while under Gentile rule there were times of great victory for the Jewish people:

“...the Jews themselves *overpowered those who hated them...and no one could withstand them*, because fear of them fell upon all people. And all the officials of the provinces, the satraps, the governors, and all those doing the

king's work, *helped* the Jews...*the Jews defeated all their enemies* with the stroke of the sword, with slaughter and destruction, and did what they pleased with those who hated them" (Esther 9:1-5).

We recall that under Gentile rule, Daniel was highly exalted by king Nebuchadnezzar:

"Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon" (Dan. 2:48). "Daniel was preferred...because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm" (Dan. 6:2, 3). "Daniel *prospered* in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian" (Dan. 6:28).

During the Babylonian captivity, even the former king of Judah was treated well by a new king who came to power:

"He brought him out of prison...spoke *kindly* to him, and gave him a more prominent seat than those of the kings who were with him in Babylon. So Jehoiachin changed from his prison garments, and he ate bread regularly before the king all the days of his life" (Jer. 52:31-34).

Though under Gentile rule, Ezra could write in glowing terms of victories regarding Jerusalem:

"For we were bondmen; *yet* our God has not forsaken us in our bondage, but has extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem" (Ezra 9:9).

There is no reason to suppose that being under Gentile *rule* means the same as being *trodden down* by Gentiles.

Was the Gentile King Cyrus "treading down" Jerusalem when he allowed the captives to return and rebuild their city? Just the opposite: He was helping *rebuild* it! As Isaiah had prophesied, "Thus says the LORD...to Cyrus...I have raised him up...He shall build My city, and let my exiles go free" (Isa. 45:1-13; Ezra 1:2).

Was Cyrus “treading down” Jerusalem when he ordered the temple articles to be returned that had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar? (Ezra 1:7-11).

Was King Darius “treading down” Jerusalem when he issued tax breaks, supplied animals for sacrifices, and provided security for those who were building there? (Ezra 6:8-11).

Was King Artaxerxes “treading down” Jerusalem when he contributed large amounts of silver and gold to Ezra “which the king and his counselors freely offered to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem”? (Ezra 7:11-20).

Was King Artaxerxes “treading down” Jerusalem when he provided materials for Nehemiah’s project to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem? (Neh. 2:8).

Even years later, was Herod (who ruled by the authority of Rome) “treading down” Jerusalem when he expanded and beautified the temple for many years at great expense? (cf. John 2:20).

A “story” is told about some philosophers—or perhaps “foolosphers”—who spent a long time debating about how many teeth were in the mouth of a donkey. Finally someone said, “Maybe we should simply open the donkey’s mouth and count them!”

With all the talk about the “times of the Gentiles,” why not simply open to the *one and only* verse that uses the term and see what it says! Here are the words of Jesus, including *that verse*, and *context*:

“The days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down. So they asked him, saying, ‘Teacher, when will *these things* be? And what sign will there be when *these things* are about to take place?’ And he said...When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near...for *these* are the days of vengeance, that all [these] *things* which are written may be fulfilled...For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon *this* people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. *And Jerusalem will be trodden down by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles*

are fulfilled....this generation will by no means pass away till all [these] things take place" (Luke 21:6-32).*

This passage *unmistakably* answers all the basic **WHAT? WHO? WHERE? WHY? and WHEN?** questions:

WHAT was to be trodden down? "Jerusalem shall be trodden down."

WHO was to tread down Jerusalem? "Armies" made up of "Gentiles."

WHERE would this happen? There would be "distress in the *land* [Judea] and wrath upon *this people* [the Jews]." Those who would escape in Judea would need to "flee to the mountains," those in Jerusalem would need to "depart," and those in the country were not to "enter" the city because of the coming desolation.

WHY would Jerusalem be trodden down? Because the people of Jerusalem rejected Jesus Christ. In his words: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate...There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (Matt. 23:37, 38; 24:2).

WHEN would this happen? The treading down was not something that had been going on for centuries—and would "continue" for centuries to come—as the Watchtower claims. Notice the word "shall" in Jesus' words: "And when you *shall* see Jerusalem surrounded with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is near...there *shall* be great distress in the land...Jerusalem *shall* be trodden down of the Gentiles."

So deeply ingrained in the minds of Jehovah's Witnesses that the "times of the Gentiles" began centuries before the time of Christ, when they read Luke 21:24 the word "shall" (or an equivalent word, depending on translation) seems to disappear!

* We have used the NKJV here as a basic text, but for uniformity have retained the terms Russell used: "trodden down," rather than "trampled down," and "times of the Gentiles" rather than "times of the nations." *Any* translation can be used—the message is the same.

The statement is even made that during Jesus' earthly ministry, his mention of the times of the Gentiles shows this time period "had *not yet ended*"; that it "was *still in effect* in Jesus' time and would *continue* until the last days," ending in 1914. (*The Watchtower*, Oct. 1, 2014, p. 13).

What? Jesus indicated that the times of the Gentiles had not yet *ended*? That is misleading—implying the times of the Gentiles had already begun. How could something that had not begun, be still in effect? Then we are told that the times of the Gentiles would *continue* until the last days. If only that word "continue" was in Luke 21:24! How often would the Watchtower publications and workers refer to it! It would be quoted over and over! But the word "continue" is not there.

The *God's Word* translation of Luke 21:24, including the brackets, provides a good sense: "...nations will trample Jerusalem until the times allowed for the nations [*to do this*] are over." That trampling down of Jerusalem was over back in the first century. It was not an ongoing activity spanning future centuries. It was of *limited* duration.

Luke 21:24 also limits the *location*. Jesus said, "*Jerusalem* shall be trodden down..." The setting was not China, Russia, Australia, Germany or America. The attempt to force a *world-wide* meaning on this verse by linking it with a *World War* in 1914 is, in our view, inexcusable.

The Greek word translated "trodden down" in Luke 21:24, *pateo* (G3961 in *Strong's Concordance*), appears five times:

Luke 10:19: *tread [pateo]* on serpents and scorpions

Luke 21:24: Jerusalem shall be *trodden down [pateo]* of the Gentiles

Revelation 11:2: Gentiles shall *tread [pateo]* underfoot the holy city

Revelation 14:20: winepress *trodden [pateo]* outside the city with blood coming out

Revelation 19:15: *treading [pateo]* the winepress of the fierce wrath of God

Could people tread on serpents and scorpions if there were none? Could people tread grapes in a winepress if there were no grapes there? *Could Gentiles tread down Jerusalem when it was no longer in existence?* Of course not! The only feasible conclusion is that the times allotted to the Gentiles to tread down Jerusalem did not—and could not—extend beyond A.D. 70.

Living on this side of the fulfillment, we know the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by Gentile armies is now history. Figuring from when Vespasian received his commission from Nero and declared war on Jerusalem (February, A.D. 67) until the end of the siege and destruction of the city and temple (August, A.D. 70), the “times” allotted to carry this out were three-and-a-half years. This time period is also mentioned in Revelation: “...the Gentiles...will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months,” that is, three-and-a-half years (Rev. 11:2).

What the Jewish people feared—that “the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation...[and] the whole nation perish” (John 11:48-50)—is exactly what happened. Those Roman armies so completely carried out their work, Josephus, the eye-witness Jewish historian, wrote:

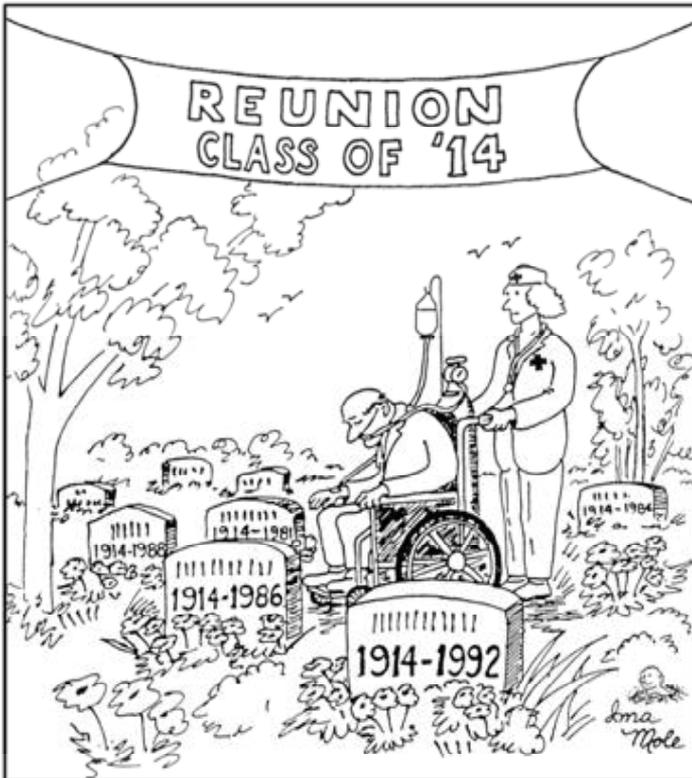
“Jerusalem...was so thoroughly razed to the ground by those that demolished it to its foundations, that nothing was left that could ever persuade visitors that it had once been a place of habitation.” (Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, 7:1:1).

Having spoken of the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled, Jesus went on to explain *when*. “*This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled*” (Luke 21:32; cf. Matt. 23:36; 24:34).

If there is any question as to *which* generation Jesus referred to, it was clearly the generation living back then. In Luke 17:25, for example, Jesus said he would “suffer many things, and be rejected of *this* generation.” One only has to ask: What generation caused him to suffer many things and rejected him? The answer is obvious. When Jesus used the term “*this* generation,” he did not say “*that* generation,” as though a different, distant, and future generation was intended. There is certainly no reason to suppose he meant *the generation of 1914!*

When Russell's claims about 1914 did not happen, Jesus' statement about "this generation" was taken from its first century timeframe and given a different meaning: That the generation old enough to observe and understand the events of 1914—THAT generation would not pass away until Christ's kingdom would rule the earth.

Figuring 40 years to a generation (Hebrews 3:9, 10), this seemed to provide some extra time. But more years passed and those who observed the events of 1914 were getting old.



The accompanying drawing, which has now been around for a number of years, is not included to make light of anyone, but to illustrate the problem that developed regarding the teaching about the generation that saw 1914.

The following quotations from Watchtower publications demonstrate how the false teaching about the 1914 generation has been promoted year after year:

1953: “After almost six thousand years of human sorrow, suffering and death, at last permanent relief is *near* at hand and will be realized *within this generation*. ” (*New Heavens and a New Earth*, 1952, p. 7.)

1969: “If you are a young person....*you will never grow old* in this present system of things. Why not? Because...this corrupt system is due to end *in a few years*. *Of the generation that observed the beginning of the ‘last days’ in 1914*, Jesus foretold: ‘This generation will by no means pass...’ As a young person, you will *never* fulfill any career that this system offers. If you are in high school and thinking about a college education, it means at least four, perhaps even six or eight more years to graduate into a specialized career. Where will this system of things be by that time? It will be well on the way towards its finish, if not actually gone!” (*Awake!* May 22, 1969, p. 15).

1980: “If the wicked system of this world survived until the turn of the century, which is highly improbable in view of world trends and the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, there would still be *survivors of the World War I generation*....the fact that their number is dwindling is one more indication that ‘the conclusion of the system of things’ is *moving fast* toward its end.” (*Watchtower* Oct. 15, 1980, p. 31).

1982: “Jesus said: ‘This generation will by no means pass away’...Which generation did Jesus mean? He meant *the generation of people who were living in 1914*. Those persons yet remaining of that generation are now very old. However, *some of them will still be alive* to see the end of this wicked system.” (*You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, 1982, p. 154).

1989: “Before the last members of *the generation that was alive in 1914* will have passed off the scene, all the things foretold will occur, including the ‘great tribulation’ in which the present wicked world will end.” (*Reasoning from the Scriptures*, p. 97).

1992: “Today, a small percentage of mankind can still recall the dramatic events of 1914. Will that *elderly generation* pass away before God saves the earth from ruin? Not according to Bible

prophecy. ‘When you see all these things,’ Jesus promised, ‘know that he is near at the doors. Truly I say to you that THIS generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur.’ Matthew 24:33, 34.” (*Watchtower* May 1, 1992, p. 3).

1994: “From a purely human viewpoint, it could appear that these developments could hardly take place before *the generation of 1914* disappears from the scene. But fulfillment of all the foretold events affecting *the generation of 1914* does not depend on comparatively slow human action. Jehovah’s prophetic word through Christ Jesus is: ‘This generation (of 1914) will by no means pass away....Jehovah...will bring about the fulfillment of his Son’s words in a relatively *short time*.’” (*Watchtower* May 15, 1994, p. 6).

Year after year the masthead of *Awake!* magazine read:

“...this magazine builds confidence in the Creator’s promise of a peaceful and secure new world *before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away*.”

That was still included in the October 22, 1995 issue. But then, beginning with the November 8, 1995 issue, the wording about the 1914 generation was quietly omitted:

“...this magazine builds confidence in the Creator’s promise of a peaceful and secure new world *that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things*.”

The utter falseness about “the generation that saw the events of 1914” had become so obvious, the wording *had* to be changed. This would have been an ideal time for the Governing Body to simply admit the 1914 teaching was a mistake—and move on. But long-held beliefs are not easily set aside. Religious leaders (in any denomination) have a fear—and understandably so—that if they were to question one doctrine, it could put in question other doctrines they hold, doctrines that may be valid.

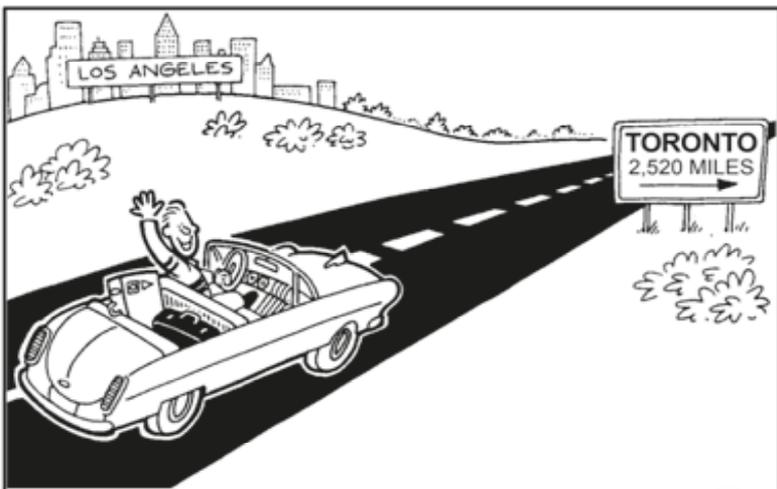
In 2013—just prior to the year that would mark the passing of a century of excuses and failed claims about 1914—the July 15 issue of *The Watchtower* offered still another explanation:

“For a number of years, we thought that the great tribulation began in 1914 with World War I and that ‘those days were cut short’ by Jehovah in 1918 when the war ended.” But now, “upon further examination,” we understand the signal for the beginning of the great tribulation will be *when the United Nations attacks the churches of Christendom* and other false religions that make up Babylon the Great. The article goes on to say that ultimately even Jehovah’s Witnesses will face destruction, but Jehovah will spare them and “cut short the attack of the United Nations.”

“After that, we will witness Armageddon, the climax of the great tribulation,” the article says, and then will come Christ’s Millennial rule. So there will first be an “interval” during which the United Nations will destroy the churches and other false religions. How long will that interval be? That interval, says the article (pp. 4, 5), will be “OF UNKNOWN LENGTH.” *What?*

After all the effort and enormous expense to spread the 1914 teaching, how important was it? If one can set a date and then, later, add an interval “of unknown length,” what purpose did the initial date serve? *Any* date could have been pulled out of the air and been just as valid—a date that measures to nowhere.

The distance from Los Angeles to Toronto is 2,520 miles. But if a man drives these 2,520 miles and Toronto is nowhere to be found, he would surely conclude that something is amiss. He may



obtain information from men who claim they can read a roadmap better than others. When they say there is an additional distance of “unknown length,” this does not solve the problem.

So now, according to Watchtower teaching, people can expect the United Nations to start destroying all churches and false religions. This will signal the beginning of the great tribulation, which will be of “unknown length,” and lead to Armageddon!

That God will destroy the churches is not a new Watchtower teaching—just an old one recycled. *The Finished Mystery*, published in 1917, soon after Russell’s death, made this claim:

“In the year 1918, when God destroys the churches wholesale and the church members by millions, it shall be that any that escape shall come to the works of Pastor Russell to learn the meaning of the downfall of ‘Christianity’.” (*The Finished Mystery*, p. 485).

Jehovah’s Witnesses claim they alone are “the true Christian congregation,” all others are of Satan! “Outside the true Christian congregation, what alternative organization is there? Only Satan’s organization consisting of his political ‘wild beast’ and his Babylonian world empire of false religion” (*The Watchtower*, March 1, 1979, p. 24). Or consider this quote, also from *The Watchtower*:

“Over the last seven decades, in conjunction with proclaiming the glorious hope of Jehovah’s incoming Kingdom, Jehovah’s Witnesses...in hundreds of millions of frank, hard-hitting Bible-based publications, have exposed *Christendom* as the most powerful force in the religious whore, ‘Babylon the Great,’ denounced in Revelation chapters 17 and 18.” (*The Watchtower*, April 1, 1988, p. 24).

Two men from the nearby Kingdom Hall came to my door. Both, it appeared to me, were sincere and honest men. I asked what their status would be if they were to reject the 1914 date. They said they would be disfellowshipped and shunned as “apostates.” The very thought, it seemed to me, was quite fearful to them. I remembered the parents of the blind man that Jesus healed—they feared being “put out of the synagogue” (John 9:22, cf. John 12:42).

The fear of being put out of the Kingdom Hall can be very real. Since the Watchtower identifies “Christendom” with “the religious whore, ‘Babylon the Great’,” where could they go? Without the Kingdom Hall, would their only other choice be one of the Whore Houses of Christendom?

Frederick W. Franz (1893 – 1992), president of the Watch Tower Society, is quoted as saying in 1979: “*The sole purpose of our existence as a Society is to announce the Kingdom established in 1914 and to sound the warning of the fall of Babylon the Great. We have a special message to deliver.*” (Quotation cited in *The Gentile Times Reconsidered*, Carl Olof Jonsson, p. 5.)

According to *The Watchtower* (January 1, 1988, pp. 10, 11) the teaching that God’s kingdom was established at the end of the “Gentile Times” in 1914 is “the *most important* event of our time,” beside which “*all other things pale into insignificance.*”

The Watchtower (October 15, 1990, p. 19) makes this claim: “For 38 years prior to 1914, the Bible Students, as Jehovah’s Witnesses were then called, pointed to that date as the year when the Gentile Times would end. What outstanding proof that is that they were the true servants of Jehovah!” Really?

Without questioning the sincerity of those who held Russell’s 1914 date, the fact is: What they believed would happen, did not. How can that be “outstanding proof” they were the true servants of Jehovah? (cf. Deut. 18:22).

Russell taught that after 1914 Jerusalem would no longer be under Gentile rule. When it did not happen, some gave up the 1914 date altogether. Others struggled to hold on. At Galatians 4:25, 26, Paul had contrasted the earthly “Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage” with the heavenly “Jerusalem which is above [and is] free.” If “Jerusalem” could be taken to mean the *heavenly* Jerusalem—that Christ was crowned *there* in 1914—this could provide an explanation about the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled. But this only raised more questions. When was the *heavenly* Jerusalem ever trodden down by Gentiles? How did these Gentiles get to heaven in order to tread down the Jerusalem which is above?

In the discussion between Cameron and Jon (mentioned earlier, p. 18), Jon is represented as saying to Cameron, a Jehovah's Witness: "You always back up what you believe with the Bible."

Backing up what one believes with the Bible is good—if that is the case. But we must keep in mind that *Satan* also quoted Scripture and the Scriptures can be *twisted* to one's own ruin (Matt. 4:1-7; 2 Peter 3:16). Because Jehovah's Witnesses have been taught that their organization is Jehovah's *only* channel of truth—that all other churches, ministries, or groups are of Satan—their conversations about what "the Bible says" are, *of necessity*, limited to what the Watchtower leadership says "the Bible says."

They are not wrong on "everything"—of course. But we believe they are wrong on 1914 and, consequently, this brings into question numerous other teachings that are built on this date. They believe the "last days" began in 1914. Verses about wars, rumors of wars, earthquakes, famines, and perilous times are pointed out, supposedly as confirmation. Even their timeframe for the book of Revelation hinges on 1914:

"A careful study of Bible prophecies....reveals that 'the Lord's day' [Rev. 1:10] *began in the history-making year 1914...it was in 1914 that Jesus returned invisibly, without public fanfare and with only his faithful servants being aware of his return.*" (*The Greatest Man who Ever Lived*, 1991, section 132).

Centuries had come and gone. Now—all of a sudden—1914 (supposedly) triggered the time for the fulfillment of Revelation!

Take Revelation 11—about two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth for 1,260 days, being killed, then raised to life, etc. Would anyone by simply reading this passage suppose this was fulfilled in the 1,260 days that followed 1914?

According to the Watchtower publication *Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose* (1959), a warrant was issued for the arrest of eight of their leaders, including Joseph Rutherford:

"This was on *May 7, 1918. On that day the forty-two months or 1,260 days of Revelation 11:2, 3 ended.* That period of witnessing, as it were, in the 'sackcloth' of mourning had

begun...and now three and a half years later it was being killed by Satan's symbolic 'wild beast,' as Revelation 11:7 foretold...By the summer of 1918 the once firm and strong voice of the Witnesses for Jehovah and his kingdom was silenced. Their organized work was figuratively killed."

Had government authorities over reacted? I think so—freedom of speech and freedom of religion should be guaranteed for all Americans. But our point here is simply that none of this had anything to do with 1914 and the book of Revelation.

According to Watchtower publications, when Jesus began his rule in heaven—in 1914—he cast Satan and his angels down to earth. Soon after that the “first resurrection” occurred. Most of the 144,000 anointed ones who slept in death—including the apostles and other dedicated believers from New Testament days and since—were invisibly resurrected to rule with Christ in heaven. This supposedly happened in that brief time between 1914 and Russell's death in 1916, for as Russell's death notice said (*The Watch Tower*, November 15, 1916):

“We rejoice to know that instead of sleeping in death, as the saints of old, he is numbered among those whose ‘works follow with him.’ He has met the dear Lord in the air,” an apparent reference to 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.

CHRIST BECAME KING—WHEN?

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus Christ ascended to heaven—but he was not crowned King there until 1914. Is this what the Scriptures teach, or was this simply an attempt to justify the utter failure of the 1914 date?

Back in the Old Testament, Zedekiah was ruling in Judah when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:1-10). A passage in Ezekiel speaks of a “profane wicked prince of Israel” whose crown would be removed, his kingdom would be overturned, “until he come *whose right it is*” (Ezek. 21:26, 27). The reference to a “wicked prince” is commonly applied to Zedekiah, though he is never actually mentioned by name in the book of Ezekiel. As to the one who would come “whose right it is,” in the immediate context, all those lands in that part of the world,

including Judea, were “given into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon” (Jer. 27:4-7; Ezra 5:12).

Nevertheless—as Christians of various persuasions agree—the *ultimate* fulfillment of the one who would come “whose right it is,” would be Jesus Christ. But this had nothing to do with 1914. We believe, according to the Scriptures, that Christ was exalted as king *at his ascension*.

God raised Jesus “from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also that which is to come” (Eph. 1:20, 21).

At his ascension, Christ “entered into his *glory*” (Lk. 24:26). The prophets had “testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the *glory* that should follow” (1 Peter 1:11). “God...raised him up from the dead, and gave him *glory*” (verse 21), “both *now* and forever” (2 Peter 3:18). He “was manifested in the flesh...believed on in the world, received up into *glory*” and being exalted in heaven, he was “crowned with *glory* and honor” (1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:8, 9).

According to the Scriptures, when Jesus would be glorified in heaven, the Holy Spirit would be outpoured (John 7:37-39). So what happened on the Day of Pentecost was a sure sign Jesus had indeed ascended and been glorified! Thus Peter preached:

“This Jesus has God raised up....Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has shed forth this, which you now see and hear...God *has* made this same Jesus whom you have crucified, both *Lord* and Christ” (Acts 2:32-36).

The word “Lord” used here is from the Greek *kurieuo*, which means “to rule,” a term in perfect agreement with the verses in which Jesus is called King of kings.

Isaiah had prophesied: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder...of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon *the throne of David...forever*” (Isa. 9:6, 7). This promise was reflected in the words of Gabriel to Mary concerning Jesus: “The

Lord God shall give unto him *the throne of his father David*...and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Lk. 1:32, 33).

The term “throne of David” was not limited strictly to David, but was also called “the throne of the LORD.” For example, we read: “Then sat Solomon upon *the throne of David* his father...” (1 Kings 2:12); while the parallel place says: “Then Solomon sat on *the throne of the LORD* as king instead of David his father...” (1 Chron. 29:23).

WHEN was Christ to be exalted to this place of rulership upon the throne of David? Peter, speaking on the Day of Pentecost, linked it with Christ’s resurrection and ascension: God had promised David “that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spoke of the *resurrection* of Christ....*Therefore* being by the right hand of God exalted...God has made that same Jesus...Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:29-35). If Christ’s exaltation to the throne of David did not happen until 1914, these words of Peter would be without meaning.

The word “enemies” in the following passages should be carefully noticed:

“The LORD [Jehovah] said unto my Lord [Christ], Sit at my right hand, until I make your *enemies* your footstool...rule in the midst of your *enemies*” (Psalm 110:1,2; cf. Matt. 22:43,44). Christ “sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his *enemies* be made his footstool” (Heb. 10:12, 13). And, “he must reign, till [God] has put all *enemies* under his feet. The last *enemy* that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Cor. 15:25, 26).

The timeframe is clear: By the time Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 15, Christ had ascended to heaven and was *already* reigning—and would reign until all enemies would be destroyed, including death itself.

If Christ did not become King until 1914, it would be difficult to explain Paul’s words that believers were—back at that time—in *the kingdom of Christ*, God’s dear son (Col. 1:13). John wrote: “I John, who also am your brother, and companion...*in the kingdom...of Jesus Christ*” (Rev. 1:9). Those believers, back in

the first century, affirmed that Christ “IS the King of kings and Lord of lords” (Rev. 17:14; 1 Tim. 6:15). It is good news to know we can be a part of His Kingdom *now*—and *forever!* It will be GREAT, GRAND, AND GLORIOUS! But none of this is dependent on 1914.

Finally, let me affirm: If the 1914 teaching was actually what the Scriptures teach, I would not hesitate to believe it, popular or not, regardless of who may, or may not, teach it. But it simply does not meet this criteria. There are too many **IFS!**

IF the seven “times” of Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity were seven *years*;

IF those seven years were *exactly* seven years *to the day*—not one day more or one day less;

IF the length of Nebuchadnezzar’s insanity was a pattern to show how long Israel would be under Gentile rule;

IF a year is figured as having 360 days, in order to obtain 2,520 days in seven years ($7 \times 360 = 2,520$);

IF these 2,520 *days* are then figured as 2,520 *years*;

IF these 2,520 years, based on 360 days in a year, can then be figured by our calendar of 365 days in a year;

IF a *secular* date, 536 B.C. (or 537), to which the biblical 70 years are added, can be used as an infallible starting point for the 2,520 years;

IF the biblical wording about Jerusalem being “*trodden down*” by Gentiles, can be changed to mean how long Jerusalem would be *ruled* by Gentiles;

IF when Jesus said Jerusalem *shall* be trodden down of Gentiles, he spoke of something that had already been going on for centuries;

IF in 1914 Jerusalem was no longer trodden down by Gentiles and the whole earth was filled with the glory of the Lord, with righteousness and peace;

IF *every single one* of these things happened *exactly* as stated, then—and *only* then—could the 1914 teaching be true!

1914?

1914

AND THE GENTILE TIMES

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Did the “times of the Gentiles” last for many centuries, finally coming to an end in 1914?

Can a time period of 2,520 years possibly be based on the “seven times” a Babylonian king was insane?

Has “the generation of 1914” passed away?

Which religious organization has set more failed dates than any other? Did the year 1975 mark the end of 6,000 years since Adam?

What about the belief that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would be resurrected in 1925, or soon thereafter, and live at the Beth-Sarim mansion in San Diego?

Are all churches and ministries, except Jehovah's Witnesses, controlled by Satan?—and will they soon be destroyed by the United Nations, as claimed by Watchtower publications?

Did the “last days” begin in 1914? Was this—finally—the time for the fulfillment of the book of Revelation? Was this when Christ was crowned King in Heaven?



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